



# BOOST 'TIL 8

Utah's Law Protecting Kids



In Utah's 2008 Legislative Session, a new law passed bringing positive changes to Utah's child restraint law. Now every child up to age 8 must be in a child safety seat or booster seat. In order to help familiarize you with these changes, here are a few facts about booster seats in Utah.

## About the Law

### Utah's revised Child Restraint Law states:

The operator of a motor vehicle operated on a highway shall provide for the protection of a person younger than eight years of age by using a child restraint device to restrain each person in the manner prescribed by the manufacturer of the device.

### There is an exception to the law:

Children younger than eight are not required to be in a booster seat if they are at least 57 inches tall. At that point,

they should use the lap and shoulder belt without a booster.

The penalty for breaking this law is \$45, and becomes enforceable May 5, 2008.

Failure to properly secure children is a primary offense, so a driver may be pulled over if anyone in the vehicle under age 19 is not properly restrained. This does not mean simply restrained in a seat belt. Children ages seven and younger must be restrained in an age-appropriate child safety seat or booster seat.

## Booster Seat Safety

Utah now joins many other states across the nation that require booster seats for young children.

Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for children ages four to 14.

Seat belts were designed for adults and can place a young child at risk of serious injury. While an adult seat belt is better than nothing, using a booster seat reduces a child's risk of injury by 59 percent.

Booster seats are fairly inexpensive and vary in price between \$9 and \$40. They are also easy to use. The child simply sits in the booster seat and places the lap AND shoulder belt snugly across the chest and hips and buckles the seat belt.

When selecting a booster seat, remember to use it according to the manufacturer's instructions and that all booster seats must be used with a lap and shoulder belt. Never use a booster with only a lap belt.



### Booster seats save lives because they:

- Elevate the child so that the shoulder belt fits snugly over the middle of the shoulder and the center of the chest - the strongest parts of a child's body
- Position the lap belt across the child's upper hips or upper thigh, not the stomach
- Add bulk to prevent the child from sliding out of the seat belt

### What can happen in a crash if only the seat belt is used?

- The lap belt can ride up onto the stomach and cause hip, stomach, and spinal cord injuries
- Children can slide out of the seat belt and be seriously injured or even killed
- Children often place the shoulder belt behind their neck or under their arm, which can result in head, neck, chest, shoulder, arm, and spinal cord injuries

## Booster Seat Resources

Utah has Child Safety Seat Inspection Stations in every community throughout Utah that work to educate families about the proper use of child safety seats. Many of these Inspection Stations offer child safety seats and booster seats at a reduced cost to low-income families. To find the nearest location, visit <http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/cps/cpsfitting>.

### Other informative websites:

[www.utahsafekids.org](http://www.utahsafekids.org)

[www.nhtsa.gov](http://www.nhtsa.gov)

[www.primarychildrens.org](http://www.primarychildrens.org)

[www.highwaysafety.utah.gov](http://www.highwaysafety.utah.gov)

[www.chop.edu/carseat](http://www.chop.edu/carseat)